[Review of] Economies of Recycling: The Global Transformation of Materials, Values, and Social Relations. Catherine Alexander and Joshua Reno, eds. New York: Zed, 2012. 304 pp.

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Images of desperate and grimy workers in ship-breaking yards, e-waste recycling, and scavenging in municipal landfills are familiar icons of the dark underside of neoliberal circulations. Although such portrayals of spectacular scenes of human suffering entwined with environmental degradation pack an affective punch, they occlude the everyday interactions, mundane materialities, and forms of connectivity that characterize life in such "out of the way places." *Economies of Recycling* sets out to texture our understandings of global flows of waste and the lives, labor, and landscapes they engender.

The volume's starting point is that "thinking about recycling, together with the world economy, allows us to productively rethink both" (p. 15). The 11 ethnographic chapters explore how waste and recycling disrupt economic categories including property, value, commodity, labor, privacy, marginality, globalization, and neoliberalism. As marginal matter, waste is shown to occupy multiple positions simultaneously, to move between categories unpredictably, and to stabilize and fragment given regimes of value. Taking a broad definition of *recycling,* the authors document the transformation of trash into raw materials, new commodities, workplaces, humanitarian gifts, and legal evidence.

The cycle itself, the image at the heart of recycling, comes under critical scrutiny throughout the volume. In the introduction, the editors note that cycles have offered an attractive theoretical alternative to theorists critical of the linear developmentalist visions of history as progress. Cycles foster the "sense that things do not develop, but are only rearranged" (p. 10). Indeed, as Catherine Alexander points out in her chapter on Soviet and post-Soviet practices of thrift and repair, cultures of reuse entail a sense of the world and of things as a constant *remont*: a permanent work in progress, an unstable material configuration that always requires propping up in ways that reveal continuities across changing political economic systems. However, David Graeber argues in the afterword, the allure of the cycle is its image of natural balance, a consequential cosmology that underpins faith in the very laissez-faire mechanisms that unevenly distribute wastes and toxicity around the world (p. 280). Grounding this issue in a study of nuclear fuel, Romain Garcier argues that the cycle is a spatial strategy by which the nuclear industry manages its waste, relying on future circulations to defer the costly and politically contentious moment of final disposal. Antinuclear scientists produce representations of uranium's multiple trajectories of disposal as a political strategy to make visible the flows that exceed the neat image of a bounded cycle.

Chapters by Xin Tong and Jici Wang; Mike Crang, Nicky Gregson, Farid Ahamed, Raihana Ferdous, and Nasreen Akhter; Laura Bear; and Lucy Norris likewise document the uneven concentrations of human and environmental injury that sustain global recycling economies. Far from the wholesome green image cultivated in the rich world, recycling can be an environmentally degrading process that "downcycles" not only unsalable yet useful commodities but also the health and homes of recyclers. While the editors note the surprising opportunities and inverted flows through which the discard of the core becomes raw material for value addition (through very creative destruction) in the periphery (p. 3), there is no denying the continuities with neoliberal distributions of injury. Moreover, Bear notes, the opportunities afforded by injurious flows and the ethics of waste they entail can help to "explain the resilience of utopian expectations of neoliberalism" (p. 186). These chapters illustrate that it is often the hard-won legal

environmental protections that exist in rich countries that make places like India, Bangladesh, or China attractive dumping grounds for recyclables. Similarly, Kathleen Millar argues that marginality ought not to be understood as a condition of being left out but, rather, as the outcome of specific forms of inclusion in the city, the state, and the global. Millar seeks to unsettle the association between waste and marginality by describing the connections that tie waste pickers at Rio de Janeiro's municipal landfill to urban politics, histories of dictatorship, and to global commodity markets, connections made all the more tangible by the 2008 financial crisis.

Rosalind Fredericks and Karen Ann Faulk explore waste work that is understood, in part, as a means to demand inclusion in (post)neoliberal contexts. Describing the work of autonomous workers' cooperatives in postdefault Argentina, Faulk theorizes the manner in which laid-off workers recuperate discarded commodities and workplaces to assert a right to work that forms the center of claims to a recuperated mode of citizenship that strains the limits of the Lockean right to property. Fredericks also examines attempts to craft moral citizenship in the context of a participatory development project in the outskirts of Dakar. Rather than subverting neoliberal moral normativity, however, the attempt to "empower local communities" to take up waste management services abandoned by the state entrenches existing ethnic divisions and gender hierarchies as the project's underlying assumptions about the extension of the domestic sphere and its responsibilities to the broader neighborhood excessively burden socially vulnerable women whose labor is extracted through the moral imperative of voluntary service.

Volunteers likewise take center stage in Britt Halvorson's chapter detailing the complex moral negotiations at stake as U.S. Lutherans sort hospital waste to donate overseas. Sorting transforms waste into charitable donations and relies on policing the morally loaded category of "junk" to produce useful and durable donations that can properly embody bonds between American and Malagasy Lutherans. While Christian charities seek to erase the traces of waste's former lives to forge moral donations, American judges argue the legality of using waste's traces as evidence in court. Joshua Reno analyzes the rhetoric used in cases concerning the privacy of household trash to argue that waste's boundary crossing makes it a contested domain in which the limits of the person, the household, and the property are challenged and remade.

Economies of Recycling provides an impressive sampling of work from the burgeoning field of discard studies that has seen a boom in conference panels and journal articles in both anthropology and geography over the last five years. Accessibly written, ethnographically engaging, and conceptually rich, this volume would be a valuable addition to undergraduate courses exploring globalization–neoliberalism, materiality, environmental anthropology, and economic anthropology.